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October 1, 2012

WASHINGTON – Noting that the nights are getting cooler and the start of the winter season is only a couple of short months away, Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) recently cosponsored bipartisan legislation to ensure New Hampshire and other cold-weather states do not receive a reduction in funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The LIHEAP Stability Act (H.R. 6533), sponsored by Rep. Michael Michaud (D-ME-02), already has nearly two dozen Republican and Democratic cosponsors and will ensure funding for the program at Fiscal Year 2010 levels if the price of heating oil continues to rise.

Bass said:

"LIHEAP is a vital lifeline for thousands of New Hampshire families that rely on home heating assistance during our cold, snowy winters. Winter is soon approaching and the time is now to ensure there is sufficient funding to help struggling families pay their high heating bills this year. With LIHEAP funding subjected to continuous severe cuts by this Administration, I hope Congress can find a solution that ensures enough resources to help families while at the same time meeting our priorities in a fiscally-responsible manner."

For the last several years, President Obama has consistently recommended that Congress reduce funding for this important program. The President included only \$3 billion in his 2012 budget proposal for LIHEAP that, while greater than his request of \$2.57 billion in 2011, is still short of the \$3.5 billion Congress appropriated last year.

Bass has long been a supporter of this vital program. Earlier this year, he helped to lead a bipartisan coalition of more than 115 House members to urge the House Appropriations Committee to fund LIHEAP at its authorized level of \$5.1 billion in the Fiscal Year 2013 appropriations process. Last year, he offered a fully-offset amendment to the 2011 Continuing Resolution to restore funding for LIHEAP's emergency contingency fund, which had been zeroed out.

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